

THE NATION

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THE AMERICAN CENTURY: 1941-1957

by William Appleman Williams
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JOHNSON CITY, TENNESSEE

LETTERS

We Made a Point

Dear Sirs: I wonder if you realize what a vital point you brought out in your editorial of July 20 on the aircraft lobby? It sheds light on something that today mystifies many Congressmen and others who are lashing out blindly to fix the blame for our "Sputniked" self-esteem. At the time, you wrote:

"In the wake of the Huntsville court-martial" [of Colonel John C. Nickerison] "the Aircraft Industries Association has moved swiftly to curtail the missile programs of the Army and Navy ordnance bureaus, which conduct much of their development work through government arsenals and non-profit institutions, and to concentrate these activities in the Air Force and Navy Bureau of Aeronautics, both of which rely almost exclusively on private companies. By using arsenals and non-profit institutions, the Defense Department has some means of checking the costs and profits on development projects; once these yardsticks are abandoned, it has none. . . . One of these days, we predict, some ambitious Senator will make a national reputation by conducting a thorough investigation of the aircraft lobby."

So, was *that* what caused a promising satellite project to be stopped when it was almost ready to fire? The Democrats will have to do more than castigate "Eisenhower economy"; they will have to look deep into the aircraft industry — one of their favorites — and see what the profit motive did to the public interest at that time.

Of course the whole arms race by both great nations seems insane to me. How many billions the human race will spend — how many infernos it will enter — rather than try a simple thing suggested two thousand years ago: "Agree with thine adversary quickly, before the sun goes down."

JESSIE LLOYD O'CONNOR
Little Compton, R. I.

Unfair to Meyner

Dear Sirs: The article, New Jersey's Man in the Middle, by David van Praagh, which appeared in your September 7 issue, disturbs me. I believe that Governor Meyner has the support of a large majority of the liberal and independent thinking voters of New Jersey. The writer of your article states that "Meyner does not operate by any discernible

standard of what is right or wrong. . . ." —then he proceeds, grudgingly, to recognize the Governor's courageous conduct in the Bigelow case; he finds that the Governor has proven to be an able administrator; he admits that Meyner has surrounded himself with outstanding men and that his important appointments were based upon merit regardless of political affiliations. The writer then finds in Meyner "a frequent lack of decisiveness and a failure to take sides with tough issues"—yet he mentions the courageous appointment of Joseph Weintraub as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New Jersey during election year.

ARTHUR KNASTER
Jersey City, N.J.

The "Baltimore Documents"

Dear Sirs: In my letter published in your October 19 issue, I was trying to suggest a rather important clue to the jig-saw puzzle of the Hiss case. I write you now only because a typographical error in my letter as printed tends to obscure my point.

My point was that the two groups of "Baltimore Documents," distinguished from each other by size and paper-aging, fell on opposite sides of a dividing date — March 12, 1938, the date Wadleigh went to Turkey. I said that they fell "into two groups, one comprising letters dated before, and the other letters dated *after* [not "before," as the published letter read] March 12, thus indicating that the copies were manufactured at different times." This is significant not only because it tends to show that the papers were not all kept together in the same envelope from 1938 to 1948, as Chambers said they were, but also because it may account for "the peculiar state of the gummed label" on the envelope (see photograph in Hiss's book, *In the Court of Public Opinion*, following p. 374). Quite possibly the group of papers dated *before* March 12, 1938, were kept in the envelope for some substantial period after their manufacture by or for Chambers. When it came time to use them, to buttress Chambers' tale, it might have been thought wise to peek into the envelope to make sure that some of them were dated after March 12, so as to eliminate the defense that Wadleigh had furnished the originals, and for this purpose to lift the part of the label adhering to the back of the envelope.

Of course, if my theory is correct, the person who made the inspection would have found that all the docu-

ments were dated *before* March 12, and would have had to manufacture a new set dated later — thus accounting for the difference in the appearance of the two groups.

CHESTER T. LANE

New York City

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EDITORIALS

The Great Deflation

The Great Deflation, fall of '57, is now far enough advanced to be characterized by name. Sputnik was one factor. Little Rock was another. When stocks lost \$5.6 billion on the New York Stock Exchange on October 21, still another jab was taken at our inflated national ego. Then, to make matters worse, we were told that the government now finds itself in much the position of the average American consumer: loaded with debt, budgeted to the gills, crowding the debt ceiling. And then we learn from San Francisco (see p. 295) that at precisely the time when the underdeveloped nations stand in greatest need of capital funds for their development plans, we are reluctant for political as well as economic reasons to provide them. Britain, West Germany and the United States are tightening credit controls; a decade of inflation has dissipated, to some extent at least, much of the investment funds formerly available. And, along with this morning-after, sobering-up clarity of vision, comes a realization that we have been on a decade-old binge in world affairs, intoxicated by the sense of our own power (see page 297). But, as Nehru observed last week in the friendliest possible vein, a "defeat" may bring us to a new awareness of our place in the world. The "agonizing reappraisal," in a bona fide sense, may now be imminent. Will future historians conclude that The American Century, Luce version, came to an end in this fall of 1957?

Off-side in Syria

Nearly everyone seems to have been off-side in the current Syrian crisis. Washington was off-side in a number of respects: in having flown arms to Jordan in a provocative manner, in having staged NATO maneuvers in Turkey's Seros Gulf and in having the Sixth Fleet get up a new head of steam. The Syrians were off-side in screaming about the danger of a Turkish invasion—as though the Turks would move without the approval of NATO's high command—and in vastly exaggerating the number of Turkish troops concentrated along the border (the Syrians said 50,000; reliable expert opinion puts the figure at about one-third that). As a

result of their screaming, the Syrians now have 1,500 or 2,000 incompetent but troublesome Egyptian troops on their hands, who are in Syria not to defend its territorial integrity but to protect the political interests of the "young officer" group in the Syrian Army. In a word, Syria, for its pains, has been occupied not by Russia or Turkey but—cruelest of humiliations—by Egypt.

The Russians, on their part, were off-side because of the extraordinary clamor they raised in an effort to bolster the same left-wing clique in the Syrian government and to frighten their opponents. Among their motives—and the Soviets seem never to have just one motive—is that of provoking Washington to the point where invitations might be extended for high-level bilateral talks. It may seem odd that the Russians should seek to induce an invitation by acting obnoxiously in the Middle East; but this appears to be in the genre of Soviet diplomacy.

Now that Syria, under Soviet pressure, has turned down King Saud's mediation offer—the King appears to be always ready to mediate on any subject except his own autocratic power at home—the play goes back to the U.N. With eighty-odd referees ready to blow the whistle, perhaps the players can now be induced to stay on-side. It is our conviction, however, that in the long run this problem, along with many others, can be settled only within the framework of bilateral Washington-Moscow talks.

A Masterpiece of Insipidity

The three-part "manifesto" of the Democratic National Committee is a masterpiece of insipidity. The statement on civil rights warns the Dixiecrats, but only by indirection, that there will be no further compromises, while smugly chiding the President for lack of leadership and, in effect, charging him with responsibility for Little Rock. To criticize the President in this connection without taking cognizance of the miserable role played by the Governor of Arkansas and the state's two Senators, all Democrats, is an inexcusable indulgence in partisan politics. The "manifesto's" economic section is a rather pleasantly-written statement of the kind that might well win honors in a junior

college essay contest. The Administration's tight-money policy is criticized but, this aside, the essay is made up of a collection of stale ritualistic utterances: the anti-trust laws must be "vigorously and effectively enforced" (how long, O Lord, must this ancient rubric be repeated!); the corporate income tax bears "too heavily" on the small firm; prices should be stabilized "through an active, firm and broadly-based policy" (details omitted); and the familiar pledge of assistance is offered the farmer and small business man. This is pure trivia, economic small talk, political spoofing.

As to foreign policy, the statement urges: (1) that the Western Alliance be restored (details omitted); (2) that America's military strength should be rebuilt; (3) that nations ready and able to develop industrially should be assisted; and (4) that we should regain the respect and confidence of free men (details omitted). As to Point 3, the Democrats had a fine opportunity in Congress to implement such a policy, but elected not to support the President's plea for further economic aid to underdeveloped and uncommitted nations. Points 1 and 4, without specification, are meaningless. This leads to the conclusion that the one basic point on which the Democrats differ from the Republicans, methods and Dulles aside, is that they favor a heavier armaments program. The foreign-policy statement ignores China, has nothing new to say about the German problem and fails to urge a suspension of nuclear tests.

The inadequacy of this "manifesto" is puzzling. The Advisory Committee is made up of intelligent men and women of good will and political experience. Is it that they underrate the intelligence of the American people or fear to test our maturity as voters? Do they lack political courage? Or lacking any pressure from the Left, have they drifted into a position of more or less open if unacknowledged alliance with the Republican Party? One conclusion is clear: we are, at the moment, functioning without the benefit and guidance of a political opposition.

Preview of a White Paper

The Attorney General acted wisely in ordering a report on criticisms which have been made of the Department of Justice's handling of the Rosenberg-Sobell case. A recent issue of *Look* (October 29) carried an "exclusive preview" of the report which an intra-departmental study group has now delivered to Mr. Brownell. The summary was prepared by Bill Davidson, who worked on the report. Last week we queried the department: was the report to be published? If not, was it available for inspection? We were told that no decision had been made on either point.

An exclusive preview of a White Paper is something of a novelty in public affairs. If the report is to be kept under tight lock along with the department's files and

records on the case, then there was not much point in having had it prepared except, of course, to satisfy Mr. Brownell's personal curiosity. To give a single publication exclusive rights to exploit it is worse than rank favoritism: it gives rise to an inference that the summary, prepared by a person who worked on the report, is biased in favor of the department. Mr. Brownell—or William P. Rogers, his successor in office next week—must realize that there is now no alternative but to publish the report in its entirety or to make copies available for inspection by the press.

The Road Back

The American Civil Liberties Union has recently issued a new and stronger call for American colleges and universities to return to first principles of academic freedom. The report deals with the discharge in 1954 by the University of Michigan of two professors who had been "unfriendly" witnesses before the House Committee on Un-American Activities. One was fired, it appears, because after resigning from the Communist Party he had continued to exhibit toward it a degree of sympathy tantamount to membership. The other had refused to answer the committee's questions about his political associations, and likewise refused to answer the same questions when propounded by university authorities. The report condemns the firings and rejects the rationale used to justify them.

This rationale stems from a policy declaration by the Association of American Universities in 1953. "When the powers of legislative inquiry are abused," the statement read, "the remedy does not lie in non-cooperation or defiance." On the contrary, the nature of the teacher's profession imposes on him an "obligation of candor." But in practice this so-called "obligation of candor" has implied an obligation to plead guilty or not guilty to a charge which should never have been accepted as a test of competence to teach. For if it is improper to question a professor about his political associations and beliefs, then it is illogical to dismiss him if he declines to defend himself on this score.

The ACLU report provides the Association of American Universities with an excellent opportunity to reconsider its position on the so-called "obligation of candor." It also gives the American Association of University Professors a chance to strengthen its own position on the same issue (in 1956 the AAUP, while condemning several firings whose only stated justification had been alleged Communist Party membership, at the same time adopted a general statement which seemed to take both sides of the candor theme). The position which the ACLU has so stoutly defended in this excellent report is one which *The Nation* has consistently advocated throughout the post-war heresy hunt (see: *The Test of a Teacher*, March 5, 1949).

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The Boys Who Rule the World... by Kenneth Rexroth

San Francisco
SEVEN HUNDRED capitalists is a lot of capitalists to see at once. It is not as breath-taking as you might think. Coming suddenly out of the bright San Francisco sunshine into the dim lobbies of the Fairmount Hotel, they don't look much different from you and me. They are members of the blue-serge and gray-flannel and pin-stripe international, just like the people in the corridors of the U. N. or in any professional, technical or administrative convention the world over, including the other side of the Iron Curtain. This has often been remarked in other contexts — but it is a little startling to discover that it is true of what was once the silk hat, big paunch, striped pants, chorus-girl-on-knee world of the *Masses* cartoonists. Alas, that gaudy show is gone forever.

These boys may run the world, but I can tell at a glance that they are every bit as fouled up as I am, and lots of them may be almost as well educated. Until you look at the badges, you can't tell Press from Guest, except for the *Time-Life* people, who look as though they'd just eaten the canary, and the Formosans. The condottieri of the Nationalist Chinese regime are out of another age altogether, not that of the Robber Barons, but out of the slippery back corridors of the Renaissance. They look like combinations of various proportions of Fu Manchu, the plumper Buddha statues, and Get Rich Quick Wallingford. Their air of fabulously expensive evil living lends a slight chill of distinction to an otherwise somewhat academic-looking mob.

Seven hundred of the boys who run the world. I wonder if Wright Mills is right. Is it a conspiracy of mediocrity? Just as an amateur physiognomist, I would hazard the guess that the I. Q. level was higher here than anywhere except in a gathering of top scientists. Most of them look smart, a few as though they

really knew the score, and the Asians especially look like well-fed intellectuals. But they don't look like the Master Class, and very few look like Men of Distinction.

This thing started off as a quiet little gathering of a few industrialists — economists, bankers and such — organized by the Stanford Research Institute. It quite probably wouldn't have amounted to much. And then Henry Luce offered to pick up the tab. So everybody wanted to come. As the call girl said, "San Francisco is the town where everybody wants to come to the ball, baby." So there are bankers from Ceylon, cement producers from Iran, Burmese mining magnates, Japanese economists, terribly flattered economics professors from everywhere, and a few of the really important lads from the real top, and one (American) lady delegate, who makes pop in Siam, and looks like a dangerous beauty from the pages of Talbot Mundy. For a week she wears fur hats exclusively, made out of odd beasts like binturongs and dappled coypus. Nobody knows why she was invited, but what *Time* calls the "newshens" sure love her, and the assorted billionaires don't seem to mind her a bit. Such is *Life*; such, too, is *Time*.

Mr. Luce's first words are, "This is the fulfillment of a life-long dream." Yes, indeed, I know what he means. Imagine what would have happened if William Randolph Hearst, Sr., had tried to stage something like this. The poor man: the New York politicians didn't even dare sell him so socially undistinguished an honor as the mayoralty. But this is the day of the New Journalism, which is something like the New Capitalism. Everyone here was flattered to be asked. And there is Henry, the missionary's boy, on the platform speaking his piece for company, seven hundred cover stories in the flesh. It's lovely to see a man make good. It was a touching speech.

From then on, beginning with Eugene Black, chief of the International Bank for Reconstruction, the

speeches weren't touching at all. They were dismaying. There was nothing of Jim Fiske or Henry Clay Frick, nothing of a McCormick or Luce editorial, in these papers. A lot of serious thought and hard work by ghosts and, I suspect, in many cases by tycoons, too, had gone into them. But Black's paper sounded like a scolding from J. P. Morgan, Sr.'s, parson. It was an ominous keynote, all about stability and reliability and a friendly and cooperative attitude on the part of the lesser breeds and the dangers of socialism and nationalism.

FROM THEN on it was turn and turn about. The earnest and immensely civilized brown men, bankers and millionaires and arch conservatives in their own countries, tried to explain what was happening in the world. Over and over again the seven hundred were told that in the have-not three-quarters of the world the population is exploding, the standard of living is falling, capital accumulation lags far behind the most elementary needs, the old peasant economies are dead, dying or demoralized; outside of part of Europe, the United States, Britain and her Dominions and a few other places, the "free" world is turning into an immense slum. Not only is there more poverty than fifty years ago, but today the people of the "former" colonial nations are acutely aware of their poverty. They measure it against the luxurious life they see in the American movies, and unless something is done soon to increase their productive powers, "there will be serious disturbances." And that, given this all-enveloping poverty, major capital investment can only be undertaken by the state; there are not even the human resources to handle it any other way.

Long ago someone said that Bolshevism was destined to be the characteristic political form assumed by the colonial and semi-colonial nations as they embarked on the course of primitive capital accumulation; that it was a socialization of

KENNETH REXROTH, poet and critic, is a frequent contributor.

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poverty, the dragooning of a broken-down peasant economy into industrialism. Recently even Earl Browder has been saying something like this. Well, if they have their way, the majority of the capitalists of Europe, if they were indeed fairly represented at this conference, are going to see to it that this is what happens. They just didn't pay any attention to what their brown and yellow colleagues were telling them.

They drew a blank. They didn't dig it, like Eddie Condon listening to Stan Kenton. Nothing happened, man. Either they are all incorrigible or the wrong white men came. If this thing was designed to counteract Bandung, it laid an egg. One after another, Germans, Americans, British, it was the same old tale, very politely phrased by captive economics professors and *Time*-style experts, but the same old refrain: "You little stinkers show some gratitude and promise to be good or you won't get any candy." Some didn't even try to disguise it. Hermann J. Abs, the German banker, who looks as though he had worked hard, hard, all his life trying to look like the Coldstream Guards, did all but call for gunboats to the coconut isles. He obviously had learned nothing and forgotten nothing—since the Herero War.

SO IT WENT, day after day. The Asians were trying to defend capitalism; after all, they were capitalists. And they were trying to tell their "former" imperialist masters the only way it could be done. They were very well informed, far better educated, far more men of the world. Most of their papers would not have looked too odd in *The Nation*. Many were trained at the London School of Economics. But aside from very rare exceptions, mostly amongst the Americans, their listeners would have understood as much if they had spoken Etruscan. There were exceptions. When the economists spoke under their own names, most of them tried to throw a scare into the boss. The boss just went to sleep or looked irritated—the egg-head exposure syndrome. One or two, as might be expected, were real bawds, and gave pep talks worthy of a morning pow-

wow of Fuller Brush salesmen. Paul Hoffman made a surprise appearance and spoke intelligently; many of the round-table leaders and participants, the Americans especially, showed considerable insight. But by and large there was very much not a meeting of minds. Innate brains don't matter, not if they are blocked by incorrigible folly and invincible ignorance. I assume David Sarnoff has a lot of brains of some sort or he wouldn't be where he is. But he sounded like a super-salesman of electronically-controlled jet-propelled lucite orange squeezers.

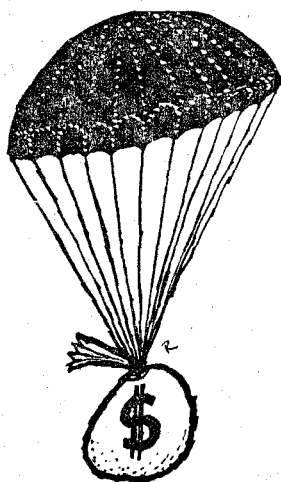
The star of the show was M. R. Masani, one of India's leading conservatives. He explained once again the necessity for a "mixed economy," state socialism, cooperatives, village collectives and private enterprise and foreign investment. And he ended: "May I take the liberty of suggesting that every American who invests in countries like mine is, whether he knows it or not, taking out an insurance policy for his children?" It certainly looked as though he might not know it. The American, Robert Garner, president of the International Finance Corporation, went blindly ahead with the same old scolding—all about "suspicion and hostility," "political nostrums," "the proven principles of free enterprise"; in fact his reaction to the programs of economic development in the "former" colonial countries was "painful observance of political instability, disorderly national finances, inexperience in administrative management and techniques." And, boys, if you don't

mend your ways, don't come around my shop for any of my nice International Finance.

Is it really happening? Or is it all a bad Russian propaganda movie? Sometimes I think that ten years back I wandered onto a Sovkino lot and I can't get out of the picture.

Still, these seven hundred fellows are all business men. They know nothing happens at conferences like this. History is made far more covertly today than it was in the days of Castlereagh and Talleyrand. What they came for was good hot business contacts, just like the delegates to any far less ambitious, far more Babbitt-attended business conference of plumbers or farm-machinery salesmen. This they got and they were pleased and satisfied. The American lady from Siam should be able to go home and make a far more splendid pop for the Siamese.

What did it mean? Practically nothing. If it *had* meant anything, the meaning would have been vitiated by Henry Luce's closing speech. Here was a man with the finest speech-writing talent in the world at his disposal, but this one he unquestionably insisted on writing himself. There were rumors all over the press room that *Time-Life* was going to announce a new international business magazine and that this was all an elaborate promotion scheme. That would have been bad taste enough, but the dénouement was simply pathetic. After all the high flown internationalism, intensely local, directed exclusively at the American Republicans present, it was the baldest appeal for the election of Richard Nixon to the Presidency and then, or in the meantime, a high, preferably a Cabinet, post for Mr. Luce. It was like some awful little girl reciting "The Dream of Eugene Aram" for company. Everybody was so embarrassed. And it contained the rhetorical masterpiece of the year: "And I have no doubt that the words spoken here, the informal words equally as important as the formal, *are already circling the heart waves of mankind*, inviting thousands of men and women of energy and faith to be of our number in the conquest of the future in Freedom's name." Italics,



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as they say, are mine. Sort of a scientific breakthrough, the combination of the wave and corpuscle theory of heartbeats. Oh, Mr. Luce, I want to like you, I think you do a lot of good with things like the Faubus cover story and all, but how could you?

WHAT ARE the conclusions to be drawn by the impartial observer? The so-called free world seems to be divided pretty clearly into three groups. First are the United States of America, Canada and Australia, the other predominantly white or white-governed Dominions, Latin America and, to a much lesser degree, Great Britain itself. The industrialists and financiers of this group are optimistic about the future of "free enterprise"; they see no reason why it can't solve the world's economic problems if given a chance in a friendly environment. They look on all state interference as "creeping Bolshevism" and on the kind of racial and national awakening shown at Bandung as dangerous demagoguery. They are not inspired by malice; they are perfectly confident they can help. In fact, especially in the lower echelons of the American business community, there is enormous good will.

What is wrong is simply ethnocentrism. The economic and social problems of, say, Indonesia, are more incomprehensible to them than the outlandish religious practices of Bali. This is the greatest and last of all social blockages. After all, the American Indian and the white man have stood irreconcilably distinct for 500 years, in spite of every kind of good and bad will on both sides.

Second are the Continental Europeans, but especially the West Germans and French. They are for strong measures, not because they have confidence in capitalism, but because they don't. The motto used to be, "It will last our time." Now it seems to be, "It will last till I can get it converted into gold and get it in a bank vault in Buenos Aires." The Americans, unfortunately, are committed to this world, as well as to the world of Bandung.

Last come the "native" capitalists. As I have said, they are incomparably better educated, more aware of what is going on, than are their Western colleagues. They know that the economic development of the Asian and African peoples must rely on a large percentage of socialism, or at least state-sponsored, financed and guided capital invest-

ment. And, of course, the foreign investments, too, must be largely state originated (we forget that Point Four, or the Marshall Plan, is "socialist" in the invidious sense). On this élite depends the future of the country. And the first loyalty of the Asian capitalist is, in almost every case, to this caste and to his people as a whole, and not to the international business community; and least of all to an abstraction like Free Enterprise.

UNTIL THE American government and the American business man understand this, nothing is going to happen but frustration. And the more the frustration increases, the further, of course, the already wide gulf between the two is going to spread. The best thing about the whole conference is that it did show, if you wanted to ferret it out, a real effort to understand on the part of many American business men, who were unfortunately neither in the majority nor, usually, in determinative positions. But there was certainly plenty of good will. If the accelerating avalanches of economic and social difficulty don't overwhelm this good will, it may, eventually, be enough.

American Century: 1941-1957 . . by William A. Williams

FOR AN American, at any rate, it was hard to believe—even in 1957, after more than a decade of dreary and foolish pronouncements of the Cold War. Not even the angriest author of the rebellious Twenties, or the most crusading playwright of the Thirties, would have risked writing such a line into his plot.

Yet there it was, in the black and white austere certainty of *The New York Times* on the morning of August 13, 1957: the Department of State had decreed that the projected

visit of forty-seven American students to Communist China "would be subversive of United States foreign policy."

One could search for years and not find a more fitting footnote to the insight of those who once said that the Russians had conquered America without a shot. And it was precisely this sort of incident which prompted an Arab diplomat to remark, last month, that "it is the West which is destroying the West."

Only sixteen years ago, supported by a chorus of enthusiastic liberal and conservative intellectuals, Henry R. Luce announced the maturity of *The American Century*. It was High Noon, he judged, and hence time "to accept whole-heartedly our duty

and our opportunity as the most powerful and vital nation in the world and in consequence to exert upon the world the full impact of our influence, for such purposes as we see fit and by such means as we see fit."

Shared by big corporation executives (see page 295), labor leaders and politicians of every ideological bent, this estimate of America's power and role in world affairs dominated policy-making decisions long after the Russians had tested their first nuclear weapons.

Secretary of State George C. Marshall summarized the order of the day in his curt comment of May, 1948, that "the problems presented to those who desire peace are not

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questions of structure." This persuasive sense of certainty confined whatever discussions that did arise to the issues of the means to be used, or the limits to which America should go in exerting its will and its way. What passed for a debate about the policy of containment, for example, revolved not around the validity of the policy, but about whether or not it went far enough fast enough. In a similar manner, Generals Douglas MacArthur and Omar Bradley disagreed not over the strategic question of how to establish peace, but over the tactical problem of which war should be fought at what time. And even as late as the election campaigns of the 1950s, the argument about the policy of liberation never got down to the central issue of whether or not the idea itself was viable.

BY 1957, however, there is considerably less rhetoric in the style of doing things "as we saw fit," and a good deal more in the vein of calls for "give-and-take-negotiation." Though less dramatic than the Summit Conference of 1955, or the shock of surprise when Russia launched the first earth satellite, the incident of the student visit to China is even more revealing of this crisis in The American Century. Had the leaders of The American Century been imperialists of the old school (as, indeed, they seemed to be during the years of Secretary of State Dean Acheson's mercantilist policy of "total diplomacy"), they would have whisked the errant children off to the nearest American base with the swish of a jet-assisted take-off. Had they been poised and adroit administrators of an American Way of Life for the World (as indeed they seemed to be when managing a counter-revolution in Guatemala), they would at least have encouraged the visit, and more probably have subsidized it. But in first defining the proposal in terms approximating treason, only to acquiesce in the trip itself, they give stark evidence of their anxiety and indecision.

Such has not always been the case. Two generations ago, advocates of The American Century "went to bed and went to sleep and slept soundly."

Even Franklin Delano Roosevelt initially thought about foreign affairs on the basis of this conception of America and the world. Thus he characterized the Spanish-American War as "the offer of a helping hand," a phrase which called up cousin Theodore's concept of America's *noblesse oblige* toward the rest of the world. He provided an even more explicit example of his thinking as part of his effort to sustain President Woodrow Wilson's crusade for the League of Nations. There was nothing to fear, Roosevelt assured his fellow Americans, because the United States would always control the votes of the Latin American countries. And in August, 1941, several months before America officially entered the war (but after Russia had), his conversations with Winston Churchill revealed the sanguine view that the United States, with some help from England, would police the world for an indefinite period after the war as a sort of bulldozing operation for the projected United Nations Organization.

IN THE course of the war, Roosevelt modified these casual assumptions about America's benevolent supremacy. On the one hand, he began to realize the extent to which the New Deal had failed to solve the problem of unemployment in a peacetime economy, and the degree to which the power structure of the country had been rationalized rather than altered—let alone revolutionized. His adventures among the "War Lords of Washington" prompted him to shift from traditional attacks on Big Business to much broader warnings about the danger of fascism in America. In the conduct of foreign affairs, meanwhile, the fierce resistance of the Axis powers and the rise of the Soviet Union acquainted him with some of the inherent difficulties of policing the world, however just and liberal the laws. By 1944 he was more ambivalent in foreign affairs, veering back and forth between the concept (and practice) of a concert of power with Russia and the idea (and practice) of asserting America's freedom of action throughout the world.

Those who succeeded Roosevelt

have sought to resolve the dilemma by coming down hard on the side of an American Century. Not all of them have seen the world in the stark outlines etched by the 200-proof essence of this idea, any more than all of them have been creed-bound conservatives; but the great majority of them defined "internationalism," which has become their rallying cry and battle hymn (as well as their key propaganda symbol), in terms of a system organized and led by the United States in opposition to the Soviet Union, and exerting varying degrees of its power on other nations which sought to gain or retain a significant area of independent action. They disagreed among themselves over the means to be employed (though much less than it appeared, even at first), not the assumptions or the objectives of the program. Brushing aside the vigorous but limited and divided opposition to their outlook, these advocates and practitioners of The American Century rapidly established a pattern and a momentum of decision.

Their program was a hodge-podge misappropriated from the past. For domestic purposes, they prescribed an eclectic mixture of the Square Deal, the New Freedom, the New Era and the New Deal. As manifested in the conservative liberalism of the Fair Deal and the liberal conservatism of the New Republicanism, it combined corporate politics with economic subsidies for small business men, and the rhetoric of Jacksonian Democracy with the economics of an industrial corporatism. The small-business man has been sustained in his mythology by cutting him in on the Cold War boom as a sub-contractor to the giants, or by integrating him into the complex of service industries. Small farmers have been handled by an ingenious application of the old aphorism that flattery will get you nowhere. They are wooed to exhaustion by the politicians and the pundits, but the harvest of their fields is used to stuff the empty holds of maritime relics.

In reality, as defined by their function and relationships in the productive process, and by the mis-

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use of their labor, these Americans are being subsumed in the general degradation of the middle class. Many of them who understood this process, and most of them who merely sensed it, turned in their weakness and anger to such men as Senator Joseph McCarthy. So, too, did others who aspired to the high roads of corporate power, but found themselves mired in the poverty of self-made wealth. The failure of this movement was one of the most ironic aspects of the Cold War. For by choosing anti-communism as their issue, these men defeated themselves. That was not an issue, but only an article of faith in the ideology of The American Century. In keeping with the logic of ancient scholasticism, the debate became a row about the number of Communists that could hide in the Department of State. A great many of the innocent faithful were destroyed, and the Truth was institutionalized in various oaths and rituals, but the cult itself was subsumed in the established church.

Rounding out the profile of domestic affairs, deeply conservative corporation directors such as Averell Harriman campaigned with the rhetoric of left-wing liberals, while liberal intellectuals such as Adlai Stevenson reassured the corporation directors that "every new frontier in American progress has been, and will always be, opened up by the joint enterprise of business and government." In this fashion, the mud-died politics of a corporate economy has deposited a sediment of evasion, half-truths, frustration and fear across the fabric of American democracy. Given this soil, McCarthyism was as natural as a thistle—and just as fruitful.

DOMESTIC affairs are always writ large in foreign policy, and the bipartisans for an American Century provided additional proof of that axiom. Under their guidance, American power in the form of a monopoly of the atomic bomb, and an economy more powerful than that of the rest of the world combined, has been deployed vigorously and extensively to thwart the evil designs of the Soviet Union, and to structure the

world for the positive application of American leadership. Within this framework, the public was assured, other countries would prosper according to the genius of the American political economy. Thus the internationalization of America's Permanent Revolution would subvert world communism. Theodore Roosevelt's civilizing mission would be fulfilled by American exports, the Strategic Air Command and the reforms of the Fair Deal. The democracy of all this has never been ques-



tioned. "What we must do now," explained Secretary of State James Byrnes in July, 1945, "is not to make the world safe for democracy but make the world safe for the United States."

In a perfect union of convenience and necessity, liberals have embraced conservatives before the altar of The American Century. Democrat Harry S. Truman enunciated a doctrine which sounded like a paraphrase of the Republican Roosevelt's corollary to the Monroe Doctrine (which had been conceived as a bipartisan option on the Western Hemisphere, and which Woodrow Wilson later proposed extending to the world). Republican John Foster Dulles completed the process of homogenization by delivering speeches and conducting foreign affairs in the crusading tradition of Democrat Woodrow Wilson. The rest of the world was assured that it had nothing to fear: its tomorrows would be even better versions of America's yesterdays. As

Truman explained, the future itself is America's new frontier: "All we need to do is to undertake the proper development of vast areas and virtually unlimited resources in many parts of the world." Skeptics who fretted over the morality or the economics of the program were answered by Secretary of State Dean Acheson. Overseas aid and investment would solve the hard practical problem of building a functioning system at home. As for morality, nothing could be more just: "We are willing to help people who believe the way we do, to continue to live the way they want to live."

BUT within the last five years, it has become apparent that something is awry. Granting that it is a "tough assignment," as *The New York Times* pointed out, "to be policeman, banker, and baby-sitter" to the world, there are questions which remained unasked—let alone unanswered—by this explanation. Not only have the Russians achieved the bomb, but unimpeachable sources reveal that America is "losing touch with the peoples of the world." Most revealing of all, perhaps, is the way earlier analyses and arguments have been revised.

George Frost Kennan asserted in 1946 that America had it in its power "to force upon the Kremlin a far greater degree of moderation and circumspection than it has had to observe in recent years, and in this way to promote tendencies which must eventually find their outlet in either the breakup or the gradual mellowing of Soviet power." By 1956 he was willing to concede "to the Russians the privilege of their privacy and differences"; and concluded that any significant changes in Russia would come about, not as the result of America's ability "to force" them, but in the process of the natural slowing down of revolutions.

More recent progress reports suggest the need for revising other policies. South Korea's economy, noted C. L. Sulzberger of *The New York Times*, is "an impossible mess" with inflation "rampant and usury rife"; Syngman Rhee is "unabashedly anxious to start a new hot war." Sulzberger also warned

that Turkey's economy, supposedly America's showplace in the Middle East, is stagnating on the brink of collapse. Latin Americans spoke for themselves, often employing humor to convey their estimate of Washington's outlook and policies (see U.S. and Latin America, by Betty Kirk, *The Nation*, October 5). One story, in particular, typifies a growing reaction in that region. It likened a nation which always followed Washington's wishes to a man "married to a rich woman who gives him a night out every week — on her money." But perhaps the crisis has been laid wide open by the American newspaper which, in printing the story, apparently thought it had countered the thrust with the flippant rejoinder: "Is that bad?"

HOWEVER characterized and symbolized, the depth and scope of the crisis is apparent. Even Senator A. J. Ellender of Louisiana withdrew from the battle for white supremacy long enough to issue a call for "a new foreign policy." As with a number of other leaders, the Senator seemed unaware that it is well-nigh impossible to effect a fundamental improvement in foreign policy without rectifying a few errors at home. But many Americans are beginning to sense for themselves that a prosperity paid for in the coin of chicanery and collusion, inflation and inequities, aimlessness and alienation, is very apt to become an air-conditioned nightmare, even if it does not lead in their lifetimes to nuclear war. That rhetorical bluff about an "agonizing reappraisal," once employed as a maneuver to yank an ally back into line, has become a necessity for American society itself.

As one policy-maker plaintively admitted, "It was much more simple in the old days. Then, the Russians denounced everything we did. And we hollered right back. Now, it is hard to know just what to say." Or do, he might have added, for American leaders are still groping to come to terms with the fact that their central assumptions have turned out to be "unfounded." James Reston, one of the nation's most perceptive and responsible observers,

suggests that America needs "a few good old-fashioned, cantankerous, argumentative, hell-raising, channel-crossing, fault-finding grumblers. Preferably with ideas." But as Reston no doubt understands, The American Century was not designed to mass-produce non-conformists with ideas.

For that reason, among others, it is difficult to overcome the inertia of bipartisanship. As the party of the outs, the Democrats might have been expected to take the initiative. They have not. "Seldom in contemporary history," concluded Reston in 1955, "has an opposition party been so slow or so ineffective in its criticism of major policies as the Democrats in the last two years. . . ." Later events have done little to modify that judgment, or to suggest that the Republicans have been doing their own homework.

Reston's criticism was short-sighted, however, in that it neglected the fact that new ideas stem from a new insight or a new angle of vision. They are not developed by the reactionary calculus of political opportunism, by the fuzzy logic of avoidance, or by giving old reforms a coat of new rhetoric. Neither is the direct, frontal assault apt to supply answers; perhaps, indeed, it is the most unsatisfactory of all methods. In one form or another, it distills a means appropriate in one instance into a doctrinaire policy for all cases; and this, in turn, either creates more problems than are solved, or leads to the conclusion that it is impossible to solve the big problems. And neither resignation nor frustration is conducive to a creative foreign policy. These are not, however, the only alternatives; for while it is true that trouble is the lot of man, it does not follow that any given difficulty is insurmountable. It is more helpful to realize that the big problems are more often solved by the positive application and development of an idea which usually seems unrelated to the issue at hand.

THUS, IN the crisis of The American Century, it is more rewarding to turn from a scramble for panaceas to a re-evaluation of America's ideas

about itself and the world. This shift in approach makes it possible to understand that it was not a laxness in the American weapons program which has produced the crisis. The crisis developed and matured during a period when America enjoyed a significant relative weapons advantage. The crucial factor was the way Americans interpreted this as an *absolute* superiority, and the manner in which they sought to use their supposed supremacy.

Thomas J. Hamilton of the *Times* provided a concise summary of the thinking that guided American policy-makers during those years: in 1946, he recalled, "and in fact until 1949, the United States . . . had the means of forcing the Soviet Union to its knees with a preventive war." Secretaries of State Acheson and Dulles translated that assumption into a bipartisan program of "total diplomacy" designed to win the victory without the war. But the improvement in the power position of the Soviet Union destroyed the logic of Acheson's old argument that America could not negotiate until it established "positions of strength." By now it is apparent that America, assuming that it enjoyed a position of strength in the absolute sense, refused to negotiate during the years when it did hold a relative advantage.

"For too many years," as Senator Mike Mansfield belatedly realized, "the United States has been all too prone to underestimate the capabilities of the Soviet Union, and now the chickens are coming home to roost." *The assumption that the United States has the power to force the Soviet Union to capitulate to American terms is the fundamental weakness in America's conception of itself and the world.* This is the cause of the crisis. The lag in weapons is but a dramatic symptom. Crash programs designed to relieve such symptoms serve only to compound the basic weakness. Strategic errors are not corrected by tactical brilliance.

Whether it chooses to prepare in haste for a nuclear showdown with Russia, or to enter the Age of Co-existence, America will find it es-

sential to re-examine and revise its central assumptions. If it accepts the inevitability of war, it cannot hope to strengthen itself and hold the allegiance of its allies without a new outlook. The same change is necessary if it is to compete effectively under the conditions of peace. Any effort to explain the crisis in partisan terms would be a

grievous disservice to America and the world. The program was bipartisan—the responsibility is bipartisan (see editorial, page 293).

It is essential, in short, to abandon the bipartisan imperialism of Thomas Jefferson and Theodore Roosevelt. America is neither the last best hope of the world nor the agent of civilization destined to

destroy the barbarians. We have much to offer, but also much to learn. And the basic lesson is that we have misconceived leadership among equals as the exercise of predominance over others. Such an outlook is neither idealism nor realism; it is either self-righteousness or sophistry. Either is an indulgence which democracy cannot afford.

FAREWELL to UNCLE TOM... by James N. Rhea

"YOU CAN OUTLAW an organization, but you can't outlaw a movement. And make no mistake about it, what we Negroes have got in the South today is a movement."

The Rev. Ralph D. Abernathy, who was the Rev. Martin Luther King's co-chairman during the Montgomery bus boycott, made that remark a few weeks ago while we were having dinner together in Richmond. We had been talking about how the NAACP has been handicapped by Virginia's special laws, some of which could be used to silence a church.

I began to wonder what Virginia legislators thought would happen if they should succeed in putting the NAACP out of business. Couldn't they see that the NAACP expresses the aspirations of the masses of American Negroes? By killing off the NAACP, they could slow down integration, but not stop it.

How do I know this when Virginia's legislators do not? The answer is simple: I have talked to Negroes, and I can read the newspapers—

Local Negroes meet in a church in Clarendon County, South Carolina, and make plans which, timed with those of ordinary Negroes elsewhere, lead to the court action by which the school desegregation decision was obtained on May 17, 1954.

Fifty thousand Negroes buy extra shoes instead of bus tokens and kick Jim Crow's teeth out.

An unsophisticated Negro mother

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in Nashville, Tennessee, sends her child to a formerly all-white school through a crowd of white people shaking their fists, and both she and the child stick it out.

What does segregation generalship in Virginia and the rest of the South make of all this? Nothing. It never heard of any movement in the South. The only movement it can see is that of outsiders coming into the region to stir up trouble.

I AM a Negro. A white co-worker, Ben H. Bagdikian, and I recently returned from the South on assignment from the *Providence (R.I.) Journal*.

While we were in Nashville, the *Banner* reprinted from *U. S. News and World Report* statements on integration by James F. Byrnes and fifteen Southern editors. From Hodding Carter to Mr. Byrnes, these spokesmen consistently ignored Negro opinion when talking about the "feelings" of "the people" in their respective areas. Even Northern writers seem to pay little attention to Negro opinion.

In the *U.S. News* article, George W. Healy Jr., editor of the *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, was asked what would happen if the courts should order integration put into effect in Louisiana. He answered:

I don't think there's any question but what there would be violence. But, at the same time, people here would resent any of these radicals on one side or the other to come in and attempt to inflame the populace to a point of real violence.

Now on one side, I assume, Mr.

Healy sees the Kasper fringe of segregationists; he and "the people" are to be commended for wanting to keep them out. But, since the Communists are not in on this business, I wonder who are the radicals Mr. Healy sees on the other side? If he agrees with James G. Stahlman, publisher of the *Nashville Banner*, he is talking about that NAACP crowd.

He is wrong two ways. In the first place, the NAACP is already in Louisiana, made up of Negroes born and bred in that state. (And in Virginia a similar situation prevails.) In the second place, while it seems fair enough to say that the NAACP does not see eye to eye with the Kasper group (the Perez group in New Orleans), it seems hardly right to suggest that the NAACP is out to inflame anybody, though some people may inflame themselves over NAACP action.

What Mr. Healy ought to tell his "people" to watch is that ordinary Louisiana Negro whose opinions he ignored in the *U.S. News* piece.

The 1950 census showed 1,767,799 white persons in Louisiana and 882,428 (not enough to be quoted) Negroes. About 200,000 of the Negroes live in greater New Orleans. I talked with a sizeable cross-section of them—business men, professionals, newspapermen, waiters, plain workers, guys in the street. From the way they talked, Mr. Healy and Mr. Stahlman would deduce that they all must just have arrived from Harlem. But it isn't their talk that makes these indigenous Southern Negroes sound like

Northern radicals; it is their actions.

According to state laws passed last year, Negroes and whites are forbidden to mingle at sports events, social affairs, in cafes, or almost anywhere else. All this has been interpreted to mean that cab drivers should not carry fares of the opposite race. Well, my white co-worker and I rode in the same New Orleans cab to the same New Orleans restaurant and ate dinner at the same table, served by the same waiter. Once we even heard the same jazz music while sitting in the same club over drinks at the same table. (You guessed it: we were in the Negro section. It is amazing how those outsiders come into the South and build restaurants and hotels over night so that they can show the world how much they hate segregation!)

The White Citizens Councils succeeded in getting the New Orleans Urban League kicked out of the Community Chest last spring. Mrs. Helen Mervis, the white president of the Urban League branch, told me how her name and the names of other white persons working with the league were read out over the radio in broadcasts sponsored by the councils. The plan was to frighten the daylighters out of everybody and starve the league.

SITTING in a restaurant (Negro, of course) one day, I noticed that the manager was passing out little cards to his employees and everybody else who wanted one. They turned out to be applications for membership in the Urban League. J. Harvey Kerns, executive secretary of the league, reports that both Negroes and whites have rallied to the league as never before. The Community Chest, before dropping the league, had set for it a budget of \$22,000; at present, the budget is \$30,000—of which \$17,000 had been raised by the end of the first half of the independent fund drive in August. And, Mr. Kerns adds, none of the contributions had come by mail from "outside."

It is about time to quote Mr. Stahlman more fully. Having said some nasty things about John Kasper (who since has entered upon a

new career), Mr. Stahlman said: "On the other side, if the NAACP outsiders will stay out of this picture and a lot of these spots like Nashville and Little Rock, I have every reason to believe that the decent people and the people of good will in both races can live in some peace and accord." (Mrs. Daisy Bates, president of the Arkansas Conference of NAACP Branches, was born in Arkansas, where she still maintains residence. But that isn't important because we aren't discussing Arkansas here.)

Typical of the "outsiders" in Nashville is Meredith W. Day, a soft-spoken gentleman who has been living in that city for thirty years. He is an editor of the *Nashville Globe*—and a long-time NAACP official.

BUT the real insight into what is happening in this country comes from talking with people like Mrs. Ethel McKinley, grandmother of Linda McKinley, six, who was admitted to the first grade in Fehr School in Nashville. Mrs. McKinley and her family are right from the masses of urban Negroes. They do not attend NAACP meetings. They do not read pompous editorials—but they read other things in the papers, and they go to church.

"Are you people afraid still?" I asked Mrs. McKinley.

"Well—there were threats—sometimes you get that fear in the night—they said they would burn us out, some of the letters did."

"Who told you to send that child to the white school?"

"Huh? Oh, we read in the papers that any child in this zone in the first grade could go to that school."

"And you think she has a right to be there?"

A moment for thought. A troubled look crossing the weary face.

"She has a right to be there."

To a silly question, an answer that explains the movement.

I talked with hundreds of Negroes. I did not hear one question integration until I got back to New York, where a woman told me she does not think the race is ready yet. Perhaps many cowed Southern Negroes will agree. I didn't meet any cowed ones. Perhaps I didn't go far

enough into the rural areas. Perhaps it is becoming hard to find them anywhere these days.

The successful bus boycott in Montgomery has had a tremendous influence on Negroes. It has added to their pride in their own accomplishments, and, I think, has thus complemented the NAACP's action with the moral and spiritual force of religion. In Nashville, Little Rock and other places, Negro ministers have lectured to their congregations on the need to remain calm and orderly while pressing steadily for their rights. In Arkansas, the Colored Fellowship Association, an organization of ministers, has attacked the State Sovereignty Commission and various suppressive laws on the grounds that they interfere with constitutionally established relationships between church and state.

The Negroes with whom I talked reflected high morale even in areas where violence has occurred. They seem to feel that they are riding a winning tide. It is a hard fight that they're in—but like all fights, it has its humor, which in its nature reveals much about the mood of Negroes these days. I asked my landlord in Little Rock what Negroes were doing while the National Guard stood outside Central High School keeping Negro students out.

"Praying for rain," said my landlord.

MRS. BATES does not get paid for her NAACP work. Neither do the other officers in her capacity. I asked her what keeps her going when crosses are being burned on her lawn, her telephone is constantly being rung by insulters—and there is always the danger of physical attack.

"What I see keeps me going," she said. "If they kill off Daisy Bates, then there'll be another one along. And about those crosses—burning wood doesn't scare Negroes nowadays. As a matter of fact, I had a few charred crosses which I salvaged from my lawn for souvenirs, but I threw them out. If I should want one later, I guess there'll be one around."

Up in Louisville, James A. Crumlin, who is president of the Kentucky

State Conference of NAACP Branches, drives into the rural areas to check up on integration and other racial matters with an NAACP sticker on his car. Now, all of Kentucky is not as reasonable as Louisville; Mr. Crumlin has seen shotgun barrels protruding from car windows. I asked him the same question I had asked Mrs. Bates: "What keeps you going?"

He rubbed his face.

"I've got scars on my face put there by white men to whom I had never done a thing!" said this native of Spartanburg, South Carolina. "I used to hate, or thought I did—but I don't now. I judge every man on his own individual worth as a man. I keep going because every man does not yet judge me that way."

In the *U.S. News* article, C. P.

Liter, executive editor of the Baton Rouge (La.) *State Times* and *Morning Advocate*, was asked: "Mr. Liter, in your opinion, is the attitude in the South hardening against integration now?"

He answered: "Oh yes, it seems to me they mean business."

Change the question a little bit, and the answer could very well apply to Negroes.

NEW ORBITS, OLD POLICIES . . by Frederic W. Collins

Washington

THERE IS a widespread and justifiable assumption that Soviet testing of an intercontinental ballistic missile and the subsequent Soviet launching of an artificial satellite will have an important impact on United States international policy.

It must be confessed, however, that the inner spark of celestial fire known as experience prevents unreserved acceptance of the assumption. Consulting one's head instead of one's hopes leads to the thought that the impact will translate itself into a grand administrative effort to prove two incompatible points: first, that we have really been front-running all the time, and second, that by vigorous effort we are now going to catch up and thence move into first place.

Almost without exception, the reaction of the Administration has been to treat the Soviet achievement as a public-relations problem rather than as a scientific, military, political, propagandistic and psychological setback. The atmosphere prevailing in Washington suggests that the government should hire a large vacant showroom downtown, masking all the windows save for a small space reserved for a sign: "Wait for the 1958 Sputnik." Some think a skywriter ought to be hired to spell out: "Watch This Space!"

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A somewhat more substantive assessment of the results of the Soviet astronautical successes shows these main elements:

1. The established alliances in which the United States is the anchor power, especially that embracing Western Europe, probably have not been seriously disturbed.

2. The advantage to the Soviet Union in the uncommitted areas has been great.

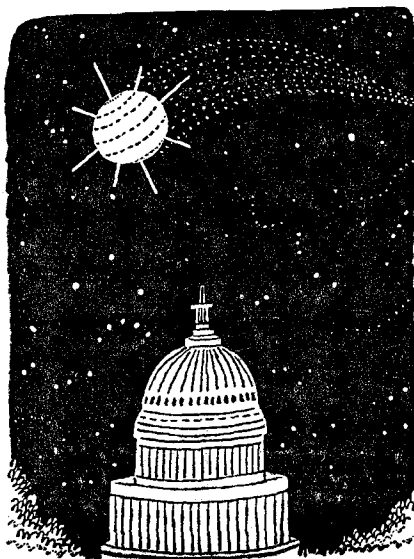
3. The outstanding need among friendly and uncommitted nations alike is for a rehabilitation of American leadership, and specifically, of President Eisenhower's leadership.

4. United States diplomacy will continue to rely on massive retaliation. But new moves toward re-animating alliances and toward an increased economic effort abroad will be undertaken.

5. An attitude of studied reserve will be maintained toward the Soviet Union. No new summit talks are at present in prospect.

THE POSTURE thus outlined rests upon what appears to be an "optimistic" estimate by official Washington of the implications of the ICBM and the satellite as to Soviet capabilities. It is too early to tell whether the estimate is right or wrong; a drawback is that the proof, when it comes, could come too late. So far as can now be seen, American policy is still keyed to a belief that by reason of the promise of our early possession of intermediate-range missiles, and of our already prepared advance bases from which they could strike the Soviet heartland, the power advantage lies with us. Mr. Dulles refers to missiles as "potential" military instruments. He concedes that superiority in missiles may be "militarily decisive perhaps five or ten years from now." What is not clear at all is whether he considers five or ten years to be quite a long time or a chillingly short time.

The political judgment underlying our policy also appears to be unchanged in any important respect. It continues to find the Soviet position at home and in the world to be under serious stress, and Mr. Khrushchev's position in his own hierarchy to be uncertain. This is an appraisal which permits policy to wait while what Mr. Dulles calls "time and the fundamentals" work on our side. Just now, this comfortable opinion



is clouded to an extent by an apprehension that the very stresses and strains which seem to promise so much might induce irrational decisions in the Soviet command, an apprehension that has been heightened by the Soviet behavior toward Turkey.

IF THE Western sectors of the system of alliances remain essentially unshaken as the Soviets exploit their one-two *tour de force*, the chief reason seems to be that the sophisticated leaders of allied governments find no suitable substitute for an American captaincy. Even though the United States has been relegated to second place in the bizarre competition of today's weaponry, or at best is tied for first place, it is still the power committed to freedom. That, at least, is the attitude disclosed by such soundings of European opinion as can be made in Washington, and events have done little to contradict them.

- But other soundings indicate that the phenomenon flung into space by the USSR has mightily impressed the uncommitted nations, particularly in the Far East—and especially India. Among peoples eager now for industrial development, this accomplishment by a power which half-a-century ago was not much better off than they are now, is a fascinating and persuasive one. The word to the United States from friends who know that part of the world is: "Put a Sputnik up, even if it's only the second one."

Given the rallying power of the concept of freedom among those who understand its value, and given the lack of an adequate alternative, the American position of leadership is not as badly off as it might otherwise have been in the wake of the Soviet announcements. But it has suffered. The "acceptance"—to use an advertising-merchandising word—enjoyed by Mr. Eisenhower as leader has certainly been impaired. To the overseas "consumer," the United States failure to get home first in the satellite race is one of a succession of events which have caused him to wonder about Mr. Eisenhower. The President's whole performance with Congress during the

eight months of 1957, and his tardiness in acting in the segregation crisis in Little Rock, form a history which intensifies the anxieties created abroad by the Soviet claims to the possession of an intercontinental missile and the concrete fact of Sputnik. It is noted here that in warfare, troops sometimes abruptly lose confidence in a commander, who thereupon, as abruptly, loses the power to command. While it is not suggested that anything so drastic has happened to the Eisenhower leadership, it could happen.

There have been two instances recently where American leadership and influence seem to have faltered, or to have been absent. One was Yugoslavia's recognition of the East German Government. The United States could only enter an objection to this move—an objection based on nothing more substantial, apparently, than the notion that vigorous diplomacy could have headed it off. It was left to Bonn to take the decision to sever, in retaliation, its own relations with Tito, certainly an embarrassing decision in view of Bonn's program for more active connections with Eastern European states. And in the Turkish-Syrian crisis, it remained for Lester Pearson, of Canada, to suggest the interposition of a United Nations border force, while Mr. Dulles spoke alarmingly (subject to change a dozen paragraphs further on) of the possibility of war and of direct Soviet-U.S. conflict.

IN A SENSE, it may be considered that uncertainty as to American leadership brought Prime Minister Macmillan over here to talk with the President. Foreign embassies in Washington have found the American policy toward the Middle East to be remarkably obscure. Mr. Dulles has confessed that the Eisenhower Doctrine is inadequate. He has offered no supplement except references to a program, expounded in 1955, which is wholly dependent upon Arab-Israeli discussions he finds it impossible to arrange. It thus became Mr. Macmillan's duty to seek to "beef up" the American leadership by the ancient expedient of feeding ideas which it could then adopt as its own. A first step is to

seek to bring Washington to some decision as to what it really thinks is going on in the Middle East and what it thinks should be done about it.

It is not unlikely that, in the fullness of time, United States policy will arrive, under Mr. Macmillan's gentle guidance, at two new positions: a project for repairing relations with Mr. Nasser, and a program for a broader and more effective economic nourishment of the Arab area, not limited to countries which (a) are our friends anyway and (b) don't need it. Such a program, which would draw in part upon the resources of the "have" Arabs, has occurred to almost everyone except the authors of the Eisenhower Doctrine. And who knows but what Mr. Macmillan may persuade American leadership to lead toward a re-establishment of British influence in the area?

Lurking doubts about the precision and vigor of American leadership may themselves help to give more juice to alliances which have been drying out. In effect, our friends will be saying to us: "Look, you can't get out of leadership, and here's how you exercise it." However tranquil the Administration may seem to be at the dawning of the space age, it cannot help knowing it has been jolted, and realizing anew that even a big country can't have too many friends.

It would be disregarding the form charts, however, to expect bold, imaginative and resourceful moves just because the Russians have "put one small ball in the air."

Blues For A New Moon

There's a new moon over my shoulder
And I think I know where it's from.
The evening is getting colder
And I wish it hadn't come.

It beeps with a little transmitter
And I think it's here to stay.
I don't want to sound too bitter
But I wish it would go away.

There's a new moon over my shoulder
And the sky above looks black.
Before I feel a lot older
I wish that moon would go back.

WALKER GIBSON

The NATION

Algeria Plays a New Card... by Alexander Werth

LEADERS OF THE Algerian National Front (F.L.N.) have let it be known at U.N. that they were "no longer insisting that French recognition of Algeria's independence be the prerequisite to any talks." The memorandum that Mohammed Yazid sent on behalf of the F.L.N. to Dr. Djalal Abdoh of Iran, chairman of the U.N.'s Political Committee, is, in fact, the first concrete proposal made by the Algerian nationalists. A striking feature of the proposal is that the talks should take the form of a four-power round-table conference at which, besides France and Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia would also be represented. For the present, the trouble is that the French deny that the F.L.N. delegation, from whom the proposal has come, "represents anybody or anything."

This assertion is at the very root of the Franco-Algerian crisis. It is precisely because the French are aware of the overwhelming support enjoyed by the F.L.N. among the 8,500,000 Moslems of Algeria that they are unwilling to agree to any election, referendum or other form of opinion poll in Algeria. On the other hand, the French dismiss the F.L.N. leaders as "invalid" representatives; until recently, at least, the finding of "valid" representatives was made conditional upon the application of the famous Mollet "trip-tych": cease-fire, elections, negotiations for a new status. But the "trip-tych" has been shown to be no more than a time-saving device for the French, just as the more recent Bourges-Maunoury plan can be considered no more than a face-saver chiefly designed for the benefit of the French delegation at U.N.

It is worth remembering, all the same, that during the greater part of the Mollet regime—January, 1956, to May, 1957—it was possible to

speak of a dual French policy in relation to Algeria. The official policy was embodied in the government's proposals—none of which had the slightest chance of being accepted by the rebel leadership. Unofficially, however—at any rate until October, 1956—there were numerous contacts between Mollet's emissaries and the representatives of the Algerian nationalists. By and large, Mollet was in agreement with the tough policy of Lacoste, the "Clemenceau of Algiers"; but, partly as a matter of principle and partly in order to reassure that Socialist minority which kept reminding him of his election pledges of December, 1955, he continued to maintain contact with the rebels. What put an end to the contacts was the famous "practical joke" that the French diehards played on Ben Bella and four other rebel leaders, who were arrested after their plane was tricked into a landing at Algiers. Later, the five were transferred to Paris, where they are still locked up at the Santé Prison.

It will be recalled that these five representatives of the Algerian Nationalists had gone to Rabat, where they had discussed a possible Algerian settlement with the Sultan of Morocco; they were then to go to Tunis, where a round-table conference was to be held among the Algerian, Tunisian and Moroccan representatives. The object of the meeting—one greatly cherished by President Bourguiba of Tunis, who was to be present—was to work out a basis for a North-African Federation of Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco, which in turn would operate in closest contact with France.

IT IS NOT easy to assess the evolution of French public opinion since Suez, and particularly during the last few months. But a few points stand out clearly:

1. The failure of Suez and the "let-down" of France by England and the United States has strengthened, if anything, the "let's-go-it-alone" feeling in France. There is still no clear sign that French opinion is revolted by the war, despite the

(incomplete) awareness that Algeria is in a large measure responsible for inflation and for the rise in the cost of living. But there is no strong objection among army conscripts to "do" their six months in Algeria.

2. The outcry raised by certain French intellectual groups against torture and atrocities has scarcely made any impact on the general public, which generally dislikes the Algerians; and the idea that, given enough troops and money, Algeria can be held indefinitely, with no danger of a Dien Bien Phu, is deeply ingrained.

3. Both big business and leaders of parties like the Catholic M.R.P. are strongly divided on the Algerian issue. Some argue that it is high time to wind up the Algerian war, but they add that "public opinion is not yet quite 'prepared'" for this. Other business groups, on the other hand, have convinced themselves that "so long as the Algerian war continues the Americans can't grab the wealth of the Sahara." This dog-in-the-manger argument is followed by outbursts of wishful thinking to the effect that, in time, the Algerians will be scared into submission, after which France can impose a virtual monopoly over the oil and uranium wealth of the Sahara.

4. Perhaps most significant of all is the fact that, apart from the violent "intellectual" polemics which marked the spring of 1957, the general public in France has, in some rather mysterious way, "settled down" to the Algerian war. Anyone who has spent his summer vacation in France knows that Algeria was almost completely absent from the minds of the French people.

As the latest parliamentary votes in France showed, it is still very difficult to see what possible majority there can be for direct talks with the Algerians. Nevertheless, the latest Algerian proposal seems a move in the right direction, and it is just conceivable that, under the pressure of growing economic difficulties, the next Premier of France—it could still be Mollet again—may be tempted to resume contact with the rebels.

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November 2, 1957

BOOKS and the ARTS

The Discovery of Cozzens

BY LOVE POSSESSED. By James Gould Cozzens. Harcourt, Brace & Co. 570 pp. \$5.

Howard Nemerov

THE PUBLIC acclaim given James Gould Cozzens' new novel is extraordinary even in a land where great books appear steadily, two and three in any week. The earnest professional enthusiasm of so many reviewers, the air of relief pervading their notices ("Here at last is something we can really be for"), their readiness to turn this book into a weapon against other sorts of book, are matters interesting in themselves, though possibly of greater interest for sociology than for letters.

By Love Possessed is "a masterpiece," "the chief literary event of the year," "a rich and wise novel," "a grown-up novel by a grown-up man for a grown-up audience," "the best American novel of the year," "deserving national praise and international consideration," and so on. The market responded to all this rapidly, and after only a few weeks Mr. Cozzens' book arrived at the top of the bestseller list. It has been proposed as the proper candidate for the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award, and its author nominated by at least one reviewer for the Nobel Prize.

It is characteristic of modern literature that the first-rate and the popular do not typically come together; what is immediately accessible is not often enduringly useful. That this is so has been an occasion of regret and sometimes rage to many reviewers, especially those who write chiefly for middlebrow journals of large circulation, and who, it may fairly be said, despise comic books and confectionery fiction on one hand as much as they detest little

magazines and "modern poetry" on the other. In the very high praise these writers accord Mr. Cozzens, the claim is explicit that he is to be regarded as the champion of the right, in literature, as against the wrong, or left; that the Establishment, white, Protestant, Republican, may find in him a defender who has expropriated the weapons of the other side (analytic intelligence, candor, disillusion), and made them, in his fable, harmless if not altogether benign. Consequently, much of this criticism is somewhat shrill, tendentious, prospectively defiant, as though anticipating objection, and much concerned with lambasting a number of abstractions, or idols, got up for the purpose of being knocked down.

Many reviewers, generously indignant over the corruption of our times, have composed a drama about literary reputation. In this morality play Mr. Cozzens represents patient merit spurned by the unworthy, and his success with this book is not merely *his* success, but an allegory, also, of quiet worth triumphing over gaudy show, of solid virtue at last imposing itself by force of character upon the pretensions of fashionable literature. Mr. Cozzens, as the hero of this play, has remained obscure because he does not do the things which are supposed responsible for literary fame: "He is never seen at literary parties, rarely has been interviewed, seldom stirs from his farm." Cozzens, in one of the rare interviews, adds that he regards himself as "more or less illiberal," that his preference is to be left alone, and that he does not go to movies, concerts, plays, or art shows.

Some reviewers complained of the mass audience, which they saw not as villainous but as unenlightened. Despite praise from critics, three previous Book-of-the-Month Club selections, one Pulitzer Prize, and the fact that most of what Brendan Gill calls "the canonical novels" are

still in print, several in paper-backs, "no Cozzens novel has ever become a really big seller." This condition seems in a fair way to be remedied.

THEN there appears the wicked intellectual, whom a number of reviewers savagely held responsible for keeping Cozzens all these years from the critical esteem which properly should have been his—"the most lordly of the academic critics," "the magisterial critics whose encyclicals appear in the literary quarterlies and academic journals" (John Fischer, in *Harpers*). "Critics and the kind of readers who start fashionable cults have been markedly cool to him" (Brendan Gill, in *The New Yorker*). "The interior decorators of U.S. letters—the little-magazine critics whose favorite furniture is the pigeonhole—find that Cozzens fits no recent fictional compartments, and usually pretend that he does not exist" (Anon., in *Time*).

This sort of wrist-slapping, these hurt sneers and offended frowns, which give to literary criticism something of the scholarly air of a proxy fight, suggest the very grave accusation of a conspiracy in restraint of trade, and should therefore perhaps be documented or else not made at all. For the defense, I may mention that I have seen only one intelligent, ordered and exhaustive appraisal of Mr. Cozzens' body of work: Stanley Edgar Hyman's "James Gould Cozzens and the Art of the Possible," in the *New Mexico Quarterly*, Winter, 1949. Nothing I have read about *By Love Possessed* comes remotely near its quality.

The tensions of the biographical and social drama were duplicated in the reviewers' aesthetic and moral judgment about the composition of the novel and the character of its protagonist. Of those who touched on the matter at all, most reached substantial agreement on Cozzens' qualities as a writer and their relation to qualities now admired in literature: "Cozzens is dry, classical, cerebral," "a classic mind, operat-

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ing in a romantic period," "a man closer in spirit to Samuel Johnson than he could ever be to Samuel Beckett." "... a degree of professional responsibility that few young writers even try to acquire; Cozzens would no more deform a character to meet the demands of his plot than he would steal from his Delaware Valley neighbors" (a comparison piously appropriate to the novel itself). "In contrast to Faulkner, say, a moralist who writes by ear and accident, Cozzens has developed an almost forbiddingly finished technique."

SIMILARLY, the character of Arthur Winner defined itself, for some, with reference to its opposite. This middle-aged, successful, intelligent and responsible lawyer, honest not quite to the limits of possibility, shows Mr. Cozzens as heroically opposed to the fashion in heroes: the novel is "a bold presentation, in the face of the current craze for the unrelated man, the drifting man, the outsider, of the ignored and undervalued but still existent related man" (Jessamyn West, in the New York *Herald Tribune*). "Arthur Winner is a rational rather than a traditional conservative. . . . reasonable enough to recognize the limits of reason" (Granville Hicks, in *The New Leader*). "He is the quintessence of our best qualities" (Brendan Gill). Similar claims of fidelity to contemporary life are made for the other characters and the action: "[Cozzens] has created recognizable people with recognizable problems in a recognizable world."

Of reviewers who regarded the book as a masterpiece or near it, almost all had minor reservations, chiefly to do with style: "a little weed-grown and murky" (comparison of the mountain stream), "frosted with parenthetical clauses, humpbacked syntax, Jamesian involutions, Faulknerian meanderings" (comparison of glass). "Henry James in his most intense writing never. . . . wrote longer, more involved sentences." This resemblance to James, which I was nowhere able to identify, came up frequently, and it may have been on this account that several reviewers, right in the midst of their en-

thusiasm, revealed that they were bored and wished the book might have been cut: "You may come away from the reading of this novel with a certain degree of tiredness." John Fischer had two other objections more or less explicitly shared by some other reviewers: "(1) Several women, of sound taste and judgment, tell me that they find the story disconcerting. They are not used to seeing love handled in such an unsentimental fashion, and they are not sure they like it." "(2) Other people, by no means prudes, have suggested that *By Love Possessed* is not a suitable book for the young. They may be right."

I have seen only one adverse notice. Sarel Eimerl, in *The New Republic*, glancingly attacks the novel for its style, the complications of its plot ("it is nonsense to claim that a writer who uses such methods is giving us a slice of Life as it Really Is"), its tendency to lecture and, especially, for the concentration in time and place of such a quantity of violence and crime, asking whether a typical American community "would prove, if analyzed, to consist predominantly of sadists, nymphomaniacs, embezzlers

The Clown: He Dances in the Clearing by Night

He took his wig off, with his sleeve wiped painted snigger from his face and did a dance you'd not believe . . . with easy-jointed limpid pace wove through such figures as the eye could scarcely follow, whistling slow a tune of scant variety like whispers on a piccolo.

The Tyger in his forest stared, chin sunk upon his powered paws while pirouette and caper dared the awesome sinews of the Laws his striped humors improvise—immutabilities laid down by conclaves of eternities—*revoked an instant by the Clown.*

He danced the twittering of quails and dolphins' pleasure in the sea and planets screaming on their rails of finely drawn infinity. Then naked, having cast aside motley of Time and Space and Number, he glided silent through the wide vistas of the Tyger's slumber.

RAMON GUTHRIE

and suicides." This is something like the argument Sainte Beuve used on *Madame Bovary* (some Norman housewives—he had met them personally—did not deceive their husbands, were virtuous, hard-working, etc.). So, no doubt, there are in real life Republican lawyers and Episcopalian vestrymen who do not cuckold their best friends or countenance embezzlement, however reluctantly, on compassionate grounds. It was an odd argument about *Madame Bovary*, and it is odd still. But I sympathize with the writer's feeling that objections may be made, and exceptions taken, to the general view.

I LIKED *By Love Possessed* more for its discursive qualities than for any other reasons. The narrative had a kind of arbitrary, cumulative quality which a little resembled the movement of a detective novel or a radio serial. I enjoyed quite well in themselves the speechifying of Julius Penrose and the meditations of Arthur Winner, being pleased with the combination of colloquial wit and learning easily displayed, but always feeling that the author spoke for, rather than through, his characters, of whose individual existence I was never convinced. Penrose, for instance, is a type figure who, in a romantic novel of the last century, would have been seen—crippled, and with a luminous intelligence running to cynicism—as related more or less theologically to Satan or Prometheus; while in a movie he might be portrayed à la Lionel Barrymore as a heart of gold under a gruff exterior. So in fact he is portrayed in the novel, in a piece of not uncharacteristic psychological analysis, as Arthur Winner thinks that "both Julius and common consent erred, too easily taken in by harshnesses of manner and sharpnesses of speech which, in fact, manifested that Julius was a sensitive man, not an insensitive."

Arthur Winner seems both stereotyped and impossibly idealized: from one point of view a man of fair ability and average honesty, whose tragic flaw will be a want of self-awareness; from another point of view, a man deeply knowledgeable about himself and others, and vastly

(unbelievably) cultivated, who habitually thinks in tags from literature (Shakespeare mostly, though a crisis brings at once to his mind phrases from Donne and Swift). The author's conception of the character requires the most penetrative self-scrutiny and a near-absolute wisdom about human motives, while the action requires the same character to be crucially unaware; between the two ideas a gap remains.

IN THE same way, I was disturbed by what seemed a paradoxical double necessity for the novelist: to produce a tragic action, from which the protagonist, by reason of the faith we are told to place in him, should be withheld. Like most of Mr. Cozzens' novels (making some exception for *Castaway*) *By Love Possessed* suffers from a want of essential drama: though all the great rites of tragedy are prepared and invoked, the demonstration remains at last unmade; as though the author had some reservations—possibly about “real life” and “the way things really work out”—which protect his major actors from their ends. I cannot help thinking that the book, in this respect, functions as a kind of secular apologetics, the defense of an image of life, much idealized, which is regarded with so much reverence and nostalgia that its exemplars may not and must not be brought down from their high places; as though some Producers' Code forbade that a dignified professional man, kind father, dutiful son, prop of the community, should go the way Oedipus went, and Antony and Julien Sorel. The mere acknowledgment of the possibility will do instead, so that in the end honor, wealth, position, are saved at the expense of honesty, on the stated ground that considerations higher than honesty (charity, compassion, expedience) are involved, a shift of justifications not without its Jesuitical quality.

Some such reservation produces typically, I think, the dubious inner nature of Cozzens' novels, in which everything gets said—brilliantly said sometimes—and nothing, finally, gets done. His persons perceive, with every refinement of stoical *apatheia* matched by intelligent

epicurean compromise, that man does not deserve to be saved and will not be saved from his folly or his wisdom—they are humorously contemptuous of the young and foolish, who do not understand this axiom (“You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you sick”)—and they go on discussing the matter until they are saved. Dr. Bull in *The Last Adam*, Abner Coates in *The Just and the Unjust*, Colonel Ross and Captain Hicks in *Guard of Honor*, and now Arthur Winner, all, to Mr. Cozzens, are the salt of the earth, to whom nothing may happen. They simply go on, their awareness of life's melancholy pointlessness substituting for their crucial experience of it. And their immunity is, as it were, made up for by any number of incidental deaths and disasters in the minor people surrounding them: the paratroopers in *Guard of Honor*, victims of typhus in *The Last Adam*, most of the passengers and crew of *S. S. San Pedro*, etc. In *By Love Possessed*, as in *The Just and the Unjust*, the hero is surrounded by sacrifices, victims of crime and victims of the law, victims of disease and victims of medicine, who seem to offer up his vicarious atonement. Perhaps it is for this reason that a Cozzens novel characteristically involves a huge complex of persons and institutions; not so much a plot (though he always begins as if it were going to be, this

time) as a fund which may be drawn on (or added to) at will, and out of which a few elements form the possibility of a resolution.

Toward the end of *Guard of Honor*, Colonel Ross considers that life “seemed mostly a hard-luck story, very complicated, beginning nowhere and never ending, unclear in theme and confusing in action.” Though *By Love Possessed* is more thoroughly composed than the other novels, this epitome seems to hold of it also; not, I should think, from inability on Mr. Cozzens' part but rather from a conscious and willed decision about both life and art—that tragedy, for the man of reason, can only be illusion, and that a rational despair can no longer be met by the traditional resources of art.

I respect the view, though I do not share it. I respect and admire the somber intelligence illustrated in Mr. Cozzens' sermons on reason, futility and the will. I also am impressed, and a little amazed, at the obedience of a large reading public which, having heard for years from its popular critics that the Great American Novel would be optimistic, sane, cheerful and full of positive values, now accepts from the same critics, as the same Great American Novel, this work of a mind whose cold temper and grim austerity and firm conviction of despair make existentialists look somewhat cozy and Rotarian, if not evangelical.

Caitlin Thomas in Capri

LEFTOVER LIFE TO KILL. By Caitlin Thomas. Atlantic-Little, Brown. 262 pp. \$4.50.

M. L. Rosenthal

“IF YOU think Brinnin should have held off publishing his book for twenty years,” writes a friend, “what do you think Caitlin Thomas should have done with hers?”

It's a fair question. Both books do try to “tell all,” rolling piously in their spiritual excrement and bringing into the market place what might better be left unsaid.

I suppose Caitlin Thomas' book *had* to be written, however—given the shock and turbulence of her life in the past four or five years, and given her violent

and pathological need to gain attention by any means at all, and especially by snatching it away from Dylan and his poetry. Even her style, a shrewd makeshift simplification of her husband's, shows her greed for the center of the stage. She beats down the language, trampling the syntax and whacking her clumsy adjectival coinages until they bleed a kind of bruised plasma that might pass for wit, and she carries her book through by a kind of main force. Pathetic, befuddled, bedraggled, stupidly boastful and frivolously gossipy and flirtatious in the midst of profound despondency, she cuts an utterly hopeless figure if we try to match her up with any of the great stereotypes of tragic widowhood.

We are grateful, naturally, to be spared even the noblest of stereotypes. But the truth is that what we are given is a pastiche of fragmented stereotypes instead of one complete one. Romantic desolation, determined bacchantism, escape from sophisticated society or *any* society, plunging *into* society (*any* society), striking *out against* society in all its forms, and girlish immersion in the excitements of sensuous existence (which sometimes becomes anything-but-girlish exhibitionistic wallowing, not without moral indignation against the people who draw certain logical conclusions about her from her behavior)—these are all tried in turn. The book has little to do with Thomas. Rather, it records the partially realized fantasy-life of a woman who would probably have been much the same if she had married the village baker, or never married at all. As such a record, it is all too cruelly believable.

We HAD been given to understand that her book would be a reply to Brinnin, intended to "give some dawning idea of the long-growing years, with none of Brinnin's skill, but with a longer and, I hope, deeper understanding of the changing man hidden inside the poet." And to "vindicate first Dylan, then me, then both of us together." So ran her angry prefatory statement to the Brinnin memoir. But *Leftover Life to Kill* bears relation to that statement only in a few intimate close-ups of the poet and his wife: their cozy, quarrelsome, semi-vegetative existence in Wales, their shared detestation of literary criticism and their complacent ignorance of most great literature, their common weaknesses and their very real love for each other—despite everything, and that "everything" includes the husband's un-

faithfulness and the wife's constant desire to cut him down to her size. Mostly it is Caitlin all the way, and nothing but Caitlin, and mainly it has to do with her messes and sexual embroilments in Capri, which became the site of her campaign after, to read her version of it, she had broken every sentimental rule for the behavior of Welsh widows and had ravished every male in Wales.

The major impression she creates of herself in this lengthy confession is of a desperate restlessness. She represents herself as one who has lost her bearings utterly, and who marks the time bleakly and helplessly, an idiot prey to whatever male urge fastens itself upon her. She avoids the literary domains still haunted by her mate's lordly, roaring ghost, for she can never be sure that the tribute she will find there is not really for him. Like a Lawrence heroine, she seeks men who are mindlessly physical. To them she gives herself, at the same time cracking the whip of her own superiority over them. And they are *not* Laurentian heroes after all, but bourgeois through and through—especially the landlord and the youth who become her lovers. Shri!l, sometimes comic and squalid, her affairs with them, like her more incidental adventures, seem inexpensive parodies of her life with Dylan.

Still, we are talking about a real woman, not a myth or fiction. After her husband died, she lost control entirely; then, almost deliberately, she broke loose from the moorings of respectability. Now she seeks to come to some mastery over her deeply violated self, and this book, with all its distractions and callous moments and petty victories over the dead poet, may be her one way to do so. For the sake of the woman and her children, let us hope she has succeeded.

THEATRE

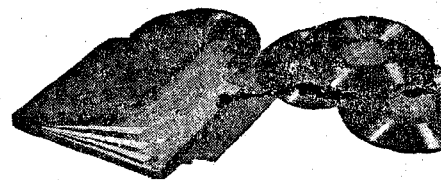
Harold Clurman

THE New York reviewers, unlike those in London, objected to the staging of Dylan Thomas' *Under Milk Wood* (Henry Miller). They held that since the piece was written for radio, it required no more than a reading rather than the not very suitable scenery, the sketchy movement and the illustrative acting with which it is now treated. The objection makes sense, but I enjoyed the evening just the same.

Under Milk Wood is a dramatic poem in prose which describes the inhabitants of a tiny Welsh village from

just before dawn to bedtime. It has a remote resemblance to Edgar Lee Masters' *Spoon River Anthology*—except that Thomas' mood is happy and lyrical; even the wretched are portrayed with a sentimental Rabelaisianism. The show's chief attraction—attraction enough for me—is its language, a rich paste of delicious gab.

The characters are not deeply probed or finely etched, nor would I say that the work constituted poetry of a high order. However, the words—over-generous at times (which is the vice of



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their virtue), fall flatteringly on the ear, and one is gladdened by a benevolent sense of humor and a generally kindly disposition so that one comes to be fond of the denizens of Llareggub and of humanity as a whole.

I think too there is a certain irrelevance in comparing this presentation with *A Boy Growing Up* — Emlyn Williams' reading of selections from Thomas. No one in *Under Milk Wood* is as brilliant as Williams, but what of that? The total effect in *Under Milk Wood* is quite good, the types were well chosen and some of the personalities remain very pleasantly in one's memory: for example, Francis Compton as the blind sea captain, Diana Maddox as Polly Garter lustily devoted to pregnancy, Powys Thomas as the sweetly versifying Reverend Eli Jenkins and Richard Longman as Mr. Pugh who, with delightful devilishness, dreams of poisoning his refrigerating wife.

NATURE'S WAY (Coronet) is a farce about some of the things its author Herman Wouk dislikes: tranquillizers, modern art, New York's café society, homosexuals and, generally speaking, all departures from the traditional norm. We will not quarrel with Mr. Wouk. Let us merely note that there are a few funny moments in his almost plotless farce, and that there were even more laughs than that for many in the audience.

SINCE the week's offerings, apart from Dylan Thomas, were meager, I pause for a moment to express something which occurs to me apropos of what I have just said about the audience. Several of our New York play reviewers were captious about *Anniversary Waltz* a few seasons ago, but it was a success. The same was true of *The Tunnel of Love*. I doubt that *Nature's Way* will prove a success, but the fact is that such plays have been successful despite the disapproval of our leading reviewers. The reason is that the drama departments of the daily and weekly press do not wholly reflect public taste.

So much is obvious. What is less obvious is the fact that those reviewers who think they reflect the public, or ought to, mistake their function and to a certain degree are in no position to fulfill it.

It is far more useful for a reviewer to assume that he is the only public he is concerned with, that the play is addressed to him and his "circle," and that his response is what matters most. While this would make his writing

seem entirely subjective, it would in fact prove itself objective, for it would differentiate his opinion from the variety of opinions that other audiences and other publics hold. The reviewer might then become a leader rather than a follower — and justify his status as part of the cultural pattern of our theatrical scene.

COPPER AND BRASS (Martin Beck) is a musical with only one virtue —

Nancy Walker. She is an actress-clown with a touch of genius. Every year her playing acquires greater ease and finesse. Her art expresses the comic distortion of the unglamorous (plain and unprosperous) city girl amid the grinding traffic of our lives. She is hilarious and unconsciously pathetic without a trace of sentimentality. Some day Nancy Walker will find the vehicle she deserves and, already well known and admired, she will be *discovered*!

FILMS

Thomas Parkinson

London

CHAPLIN's latest film, *A King in New York*, may never be shown in the United States, but it has opened recently in Stockholm and Rome and has been playing in two London theatres for several weeks. Critical response has been almost unanimous in its disappointment, not because of the film's ideological position but because it is not very funny. I saw the film shortly after arriving in London and was amused but frequently embarrassed, not by the politics—Chaplin's position has a certain quizzical simplicity to recommend it—but by the art.

The plot creaked along, and the really good parts of the film were strung on a line that had nothing to do with the political plot. The secondary line of action suggested that the film has really two plots and two moral points of view that not only have little to do with each other but are mutually destructive.

The political plot, especially in most American reports, is usually taken for the whole. The King is driven into exile because he wants to make atomic reactors for peaceful use, while his opposition want to make atomic bombs. He comes to the United States where he is welcomed by a battery of photographers and is fingerprinted as he makes a grateful address to the American people for sheltering him in his need. He has blueprints for peaceful use of atomic energy and his chief aim is to show them to the American Atomic Energy Commission. As a visiting dignitary he is invited to a progressive school where he meets and is harangued by a boy who is in revolt against the general

stupidities of legislative committees. Later, he meets the boy, frozen and wandering, on the streets of New York. Against the advice of his ambassador and friend Jaumer, he befriends the child, only to become involved in the investigations of the Un-American Activities Committee. The boy's parents are sentenced for contempt when they refuse to identify former associates in the Communist Party, and the King is summoned to appear before the committee. His appearance is pure slapstick, but he is ultimately cleared and becomes—or so we are assured—a national hero. Before he leaves to rejoin his Queen in Paris, he seeks out the boy to find him broken in spirit: he has borne witness against his parents' associates in order to buy their freedom.

This is a sad, bitter story, and Chaplin's contempt for the entire business is expressed at the King's committee appearance when he accidentally plays a fire hose not only on the members of the committee but on his lawyer, a man frightened to death by legalisms that he does not understand. It is a story of destroyed morale, and it has an almost allegorical neatness. It is not funny, and it is not touching; it is appalling, as Chaplin intended. He makes no intellectual response to these horrors; his response is physiological, a shiver of disgust.

THIS commentary on American politics brackets a second series of actions, which is to my mind the seriously funny part of the film, and the interesting part. It is touching and at times moving, and its real subject is the inevitably defeated quest for youth, complicated by the cheerful amorality of the commercial point of view. However upset Chaplin might be—however physically ill he may be made by American politics—he has an extraordinary appetite for American

THOMAS PARKINSON is professor of English at the University of California (Berkeley) and the author of *W. B. Yeats, Self Critic. He is in Europe on a Guggenheim fellowship.*

commercial culture. It amuses him deeply, and it attracts him.

As the King walks through Times Square, the juke-box sings with husky phonicness, "When I think of a million dollars, tears come to my eyes," and it is curious that the film takes pleasure in all the fatuities and corruptions that come from the urge to sell anything to which title can be gained. The reality of money is a major theme of the film, and dignity and the laws of hospitality can be disregarded in the interests of a high standard of comfort, or so the King's conduct argues. At one point Jaumer murmurs that Americans "are all nice until money enters the picture," but in this film the Americans are all nice—a little stupid, a little redblooded and crude—until politics enter the picture. Then they become monsters.

ONE reviewer (in *The Spectator*) said that Chaplin seems to have got out of touch with the United States. It is true that Chaplin seems familiar with only those aspects of American life visible from Switzerland: the wide screen, rock and roll, commercial advertising, passport difficulties, McCarthyism. But the faults with the film come from deeper sources; they come from a basic confusion in attitude.

Chaplin's early masterpieces celebrated the triumph of flesh and spirit over machinery, they were hymns of praise to biological good sense. In this film, too, his disdain for American political machinery, its mechanical brutality, is balanced by an elegiac affection for the American flesh and spirit. This affection is the more pathetic because it demands youth, and that is precisely what the King cannot give or achieve. His brief little sexual scramble with Dawn Addams is, like his brief popularity with American television audiences, doomed to be unrewarding. He can reach the people only through the palpable sham of TV commercials, and he is too old.

But he is also privileged and free; this commercial civilization is his to manipulate, and he can intellectually accept its violation of his dignity because money, after all, is real. Hence, in a weird interchange of values, commercial culture becomes identified with reality and appears to be on the side of flesh and spirit. The attitude is bewildering in its patent contradictions, and it seems to me not only confusing but confused. When it is juxtaposed with the political elements and their overt moralizing the result defeats the comic spirit.

With all its failings, its often embarrassing personal references (the rebel-

lious boy is Chaplin's son, the King is involved in two elaborate sexual relations with younger women), its shocking cheapness of technique, this is still a rewarding film. It is frequently unfunny and sometimes just not interesting, but even the cranky failure of a master has value beyond the calculating success of ordinary film-makers. The King is a beautifully realized figure, and at its very worst the film's line of development seems to provide a test for Chaplin's acting skill and to evoke a bravura performance.

MUSIC

Lester Trimble

THE YOUNG American conductor, Thomas Schippers, is one of the most unusual talents our country has produced. Only ten years ago he was a tall, gangling 17-year-old, fresh out of the Curtis Institute; he descended upon Tanglewood modestly, inconspicuously, and within a few days had astounded everyone there by his phenomenal keyboard abilities. Having won, shortly before, a contest to conduct the Philadelphia Orchestra, he elected to continue in that metier; within a few years, he had directed the premieres and European tours of two Menotti operas, a premiere of Copland's *The Tender Land* at the New York City Opera, and had conducted most major American orchestras, including that of the Metropolitan Opera. In the course of these snowballing opportunities, he might have been pressed to over-extend himself and begin appearing in public without the benefit of sufficient contemplation and development in private. Rapid success has placed just such destructive burdens upon many young American singers, conductors and instrumentalists. But Schippers, despite his youth, has the real abilities and the seriousness of purpose that alone could sustain such speedy progress. He grows in depth from month

to month. In such works as the Sibelius *Second Symphony* and the Overture to *Tannhäuser*, which he conducted with the New York Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall, it was perfectly apparent that he has developed conceptions of style and orchestral sonority which he did not have a few years ago, and that these are convincing and individual and yet firmly rooted in tradition.

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ample, the flavor was, properly, that of the opera house rather than the concert platform. The textures in each section of the orchestra were transparent, the details of Wagner's counterpoint were delicately delineated and the climax was saved for its proper place instead of erupting prematurely five or six times along the way. It was, in short, a performance worthy of Bayreuth.

The Sibelius *Second Symphony* was approached from a related point of view and, because of this, benefited in terms of overall suaveness and polish. And yet, it lacked something which might be referred to as Nordic grandeur. Sibelius, much of the time, deals in Olympian generalities, stark contrasts and angularities. It follows, therefore, that a reading which places over-careful polish upon each inner note will tend to chip away at the sharp edges of granite and lessen, to some extent, the music's heroic qualities. At some crucial point, the brasses must really be allowed to bray and the fiddles made to scrape. If this results in a sound that is bucolic or even primitive, nothing need be done about it; Sibelius is like that.

I do not mean to infer, however, that Schippers' interpretation was weak or lacked cogency. It had a fine, sustained line and great dignity. It was, simply, that on this occasion the conductor gave the composer credit for more subtlety than he possessed.

The central portion of this same concert sent Louis Kentner to center stage with Bartok's *Third Piano Concerto*. Mr. Kentner, when he made his New York debuts at Town Hall and Carnegie Hall last season, brought forth all sorts of critical exaltation, but his playing of the Bartok *Concerto* was hardly more than passable. It had, rhythmically speaking, a peculiar mumbling quality which left Bartok's precisely calculated, linear tweaks seeming a bit putty-like and making precious little sense. In the lovely chorale statements of the second movement, the pianist seemed unsure as to just how he was to achieve the *molto espressivo* called for by the score, and his attempts seemed both arbitrary and uncommunicative. Mr. Kentner produces a fine, bright tone, his technique is strong, and his playing is anything but unintelligent. But the Bartok *Third Piano Concerto* is not yet his piece of music.

THE BEAUX-ARTS STRING QUARTET, an exciting and relatively new chamber group, has just completed a series of concerts at the Carnegie Recital Hall. Its programs, arranged as

all-American, all-French and all-German, included the world premiere of David Diamond's *Quartet No. IV*; the American premiere of Werner Egk's *The Temptation of Saint Anthony*, for string quartet and mezzo-soprano; Honegger's *Third Quartet*; and my own *Quartet No. II (Pastorale)*. Of older music they played the Haydn *Quartet Op. 54 No. 2*; the Brahms *Third String Quartet*; and the *Night Piece* for flute and string quartet, by Arthur Foote. Claude Monteux was soloist in the latter work; Jan Ruetz sang in the Egk *Temptation*.

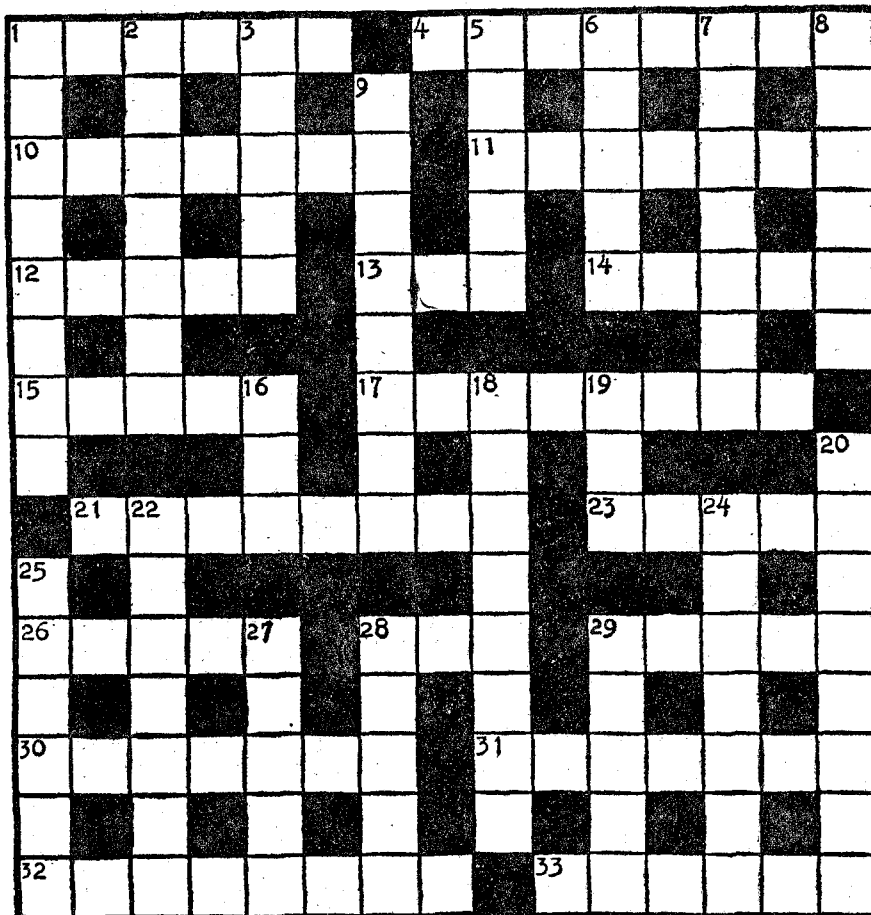
It is uncommon, these days, to find a group of string musicians so dedicated to the ideals of quartet playing that they will rehearse morning, noon and night for several years, without remuneration, in order to achieve them. The Beaux-Arts Quartet has done just that; and as a result their playing has acquired a unanimity of musical impulse, an ensemble balance and a refinement of sound that run exactly contrary to the present standards of catch-as-catch-can bravura playing and rampant performer egoism. They are as comfortable in old as in new music, because they are cultivated and intelligent, and because they put the music, not special executant mannerisms, in the foreground. Their reading of the Haydn *Quartet*, for example, was as stylistically pure and affecting as any I have ever heard.

David Diamond's *Quartet No. IV* was a difficult piece, both to play and to understand. It was exceedingly long, being cast in four close-packed, dissonant movements. The craftsmanship was mature and sophisticated; the intent almost unbearably serious. The work was manifestly sincere and imbued with its own sort of sense and sensibility. I suspect that further hearing will make Diamond's meanings more obvious.

The Egk *Temptation*, by contrast, was all too easy to fathom: a sort of chamber-music *Carmina Burana*. In a series of thirteen vignettes, it illustrated, with much meretricious fuss and many oom-pa syncopations, the various forms and delectabilities of Saint Anthony's temptations. The emphasis, of course, was on sex, and the French texts (Michel Sedaine: 1719-1799) were charming in their naughtiness. Unfortunately, the composer felt he had to leer, back-track and leer again at every mention of the bed or of feminine anatomy. In the end, the work seemed neither very witty nor very musical. It was fascinating, though, as giving another insight into German music, vintage 1945.

Crossword Puzzle No. 744

By FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS:

- 1 and 4 The way one used to toast our holiday position, perhaps. (6, 2, 6)
- 10 Became active when part of the trunk arrived first. (7)
- 11 Jumper a girl finished? (7)
- 12 He notices the bosses, no doubt! (5)
- 13 Thomas Gray's was storied, when the first of 10 was animated. (3)
- 14 Scoffs at barriers, perhaps. (5)
- 15 The command of a monastic brotherhood. (5)
- 17 Supposing that immoral thoughts contain it! (8)
- 21 Laws bringing the beginning of statehood to the Indians. (8)
- 23 A gambler might be expected to cut up at times! (5)
- 26 A quiet graze in the bush? (5)
- 28, 19 down, 5 down, and 33 across Suspended in song, but evidently not in the sick. (3, 3, 5, 6)
- 29 Promised to behave like a number obligated to it. (5)
- 30 Sailor by himself in an ear shell. (7)
- 31 Increase value, by the sound of it. (7)
- 32 Putting on an act of castigation (but it might be soothing). (8)
- 33 See 28 across

DOWN:

- 1 Tiny gunman, in the vernacular? We all must have had one. (8)
- 2 Evidently the leading part is mired, and might go to the dogs! (7)
- 3 and 25 down Measure a goddess set

down where some people came in. (5, 6)

- 5 See 28 across
- 6 Let out a false note, so to speak. (5)
- 7 Extraneous material to sum up in one stroke at court. (7)
- 8 Fleshy root in 2's family. (6)
- 9 Assistant project worker on short notice. (8)
- 16 Might stick up or run down. (3)
- 18 Aesthetic arrangement for flutes at this. (8)
- 19 See 28 across
- 20 Inclined to vanish in the concession. (8)
- 22 A car tangled with a tree and a row of houses. (7)
- 24 A lock that's usually out of order. (7)
- 25 See 3 down
- 27 Evidently such poles don't have depressions. (5)
- 28 What an auto has, a salesman might try to get. (3, 2)
- 29 Art productions are virtually friendless. (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 743

ACROSS: 1 CABINETS; 5 DRY LAW; 9 LIE DOWN; 10 CHORTLE; 12 LABORED; 13 ALGEBRAICALLY; 15 TRAFFIC POLICE; 21 POLITIC; 22 ADAPTER; 23 ATRLINE; 24 IMITATE; 25 SLEDGE; 26 and 11 INFERNAL MACHINE DOWN: 1 COLUMN; 2 BRECCIA; 3 NOONING; 4 TANDEM BICYCLE; 6 RHOMBIC; 7 LITERAL; 8 WEEKDAYS; 10 COLLABORATION; 14 STOPGAPS; 16 AT LARGE; 17 FITTING; 18 IMAGINE; 19 ENTRAIN; 20 ORDEAL.

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You may feel, as many people do, that you have a moral obligation as a citizen to supply any governmental agency with all of the facts which would be helpful in a given situation, *provided* that neither your rights nor those of others are being violated. It is even possible that the inquiry concerns the application for government employment of someone with whom you are acquainted.

However, you frequently do not know the purpose of the inquiry, and the inquirer will rarely tell you in advance. Therefore, it is important for you to know that you are under no *legal* obligation to talk to representatives of the FBI or of any other governmental agency, unless you have been subpoenaed. The FBI, unlike courts and grand juries, does not have the power of subpoena and of compulsory examination. You may decline an invitation to visit FBI agents or to receive them in your home or office.

Unfortunately, at the present time many FBI inquiries appear to be concerned with

political associations rather than with obtaining facts for constructive purposes of criminal investigation. The very nature of political inquiries means that many of the questions will be of the sort which no citizen is, or should be, required to answer. The protections afforded to you by the Bill of Rights as interpreted by the Supreme Court in recent as well as earlier decisions are as available to you in such an interview as they would be in open court or before a Congressional body. If you have any doubts as to the FBI's questions you may refuse to answer until your attorney has been consulted, or you may insist on having your attorney present during the interview. You may also ask to have the questions put in writing.

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